

Media release  
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## **BLUEBRIDGE NEW NAMING RIGHTS SPONSOR FOR KARAPOTI CLASSIC**

The Southern Hemisphere's longest running mountain bike race – the Karapoti Classic – is set to enjoy smooth sailing after securing a new naming rights sponsor, Bluebridge Ferries.

While the iconic Wellington event – established in 1986 – attracts thousands of Kiwi and international riders every year due to its gruelling 50k ride through Upper Hutt's Akatawara Ranges, organisers say the event's future is now more secure with a principal sponsor behind it.

“Bluebridge and Karapoti are a great fit with a similar vision – to grow the love of mountain biking in New Zealand,” says Karapoti Classic Event Manager Michael Jacques.

“The Karapoti Classic is a must-do on every mountain biker's wish list and has helped establish much of the culture that surrounds riding in New Zealand. Bluebridge's innovative Bike Club is helping develop that culture further – giving our riding public an online community to share experiences and information while also accessing cheaper travel between islands so that we can do what we love most – ride!”

Bluebridge, which has supported the event since 2012, was keen to step up its contribution to show its ongoing commitment to New Zealand cyclists and riders.

“More and more Kiwis are sailing to ride so it made sense for us to partner with the most iconic New Zealand mountain biking event,” says Bluebridge Group Head of Marketing and Communications Mischa Mannix-Opie.

“We want to ensure that we offer the very best ferry service for cyclists and riders not only onboard but through the online community we've created with our Bluebridge Bike Club. In this way, we're sharing the love of riding and helping to make it easier for more people to get involved in bike sports.”

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Bluebridge Karapoti Classic is now open for entries at [www.karapoti.kiwi](http://www.karapoti.kiwi). The race will be held on Saturday 17 February 2018.

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